



BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

Annual Report

ON THE

HEALTH OF BEDFORD

FOR THE YEAR

1956

BY

C. L. SHARP, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

together with the Report of

E. AVISON, F.A.P.H.I., M.R.S.H.

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR




BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1956



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PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
TOWN HALL,
BEDFORD.

August, 1957.

To HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR,
ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS OF THE
BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1956. At the end of the year the Chief Public Health Inspector and his Deputy, Mr. J. F. Wilkinson, retired. Unhappily the former, Mr. F. C. Haynes, died soon after his retirement, a matter of personal regret to me and many others who worked with him. During the year Mr. E. Avison was appointed Chief Public Health Inspector but did not commence duty until 1st January, 1957. The Department will have to carry out increasing duties, notably new legislation in the form of the Clean air Act, 1956.

Many of the problems now facing us are as difficult as, if not more so than, those encountered and successfully overcome in the past. The provision of safe drinking water by filtration and chlorination, safe milk by pasteurisation, protection against small pox, diphtheria and other infectious diseases—measures now generally accepted, were only obtained by much hard work, and looking back one is struck by the long delay between the acceptance of the method by professional opinion and its general application. Now we need success in achieving clean air, clean food, a better knowledge of diet in respect of both over-abundance and deficiency, and a willingness to explore the possibilities in the prevention of mental ill health.

I have to express my thanks to the members of the Town Council, especially of the Public Health Committee, for their uniform help and consideration for the work of the Department: my thanks also to those concerned, for the loyal co-operation of the staff of the Public Health Department, and for assistance received in many ways from the Town Clerk and officials of other Departments of the Corporation.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

CLIVE L. SHARP,

Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

(31st December, 1956)

ALDERMAN L. H. NICHOLSON, M.B.E., Chairman
ALDERMAN R. G. GALE, J.P. (The Mayor)
COUNCILLOR A. R. SHARP, Vice-Chairman.
COUNCILLOR COL. A. G. ANSTEE, O.B.E., M.C., D.L., J.P.
COUNCILLOR G. R. BAILEY
COUNCILLOR W. C. FULLER
COUNCILLOR MRS. M. L. GUAYS
COUNCILLOR MRS. C. M. METZ
COUNCILLOR A. C. KILMINSTER
COUNCILLOR MRS. M. ROGERS

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health

C. L. SHARP, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.
(Commenced 25th June, 1956)

Deputy and Acting Medical Officer of Health

F. A. WILLIAMS, M.B., B.S. (Lond.), M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. (Vict.)

Chief Public Health Inspector

F. C. HAYNES, Cert.R.San.I., M.A.P.H.I.
(Retired 31st December, 1956)
E. AVISON, F.A.P.H.I., M.R.S.H.
(Appointed 1st January, 1957)

Deputy Chief Public Health Inspector and Chief Inspector, Meat and Other Foods

J. F. WILKINSON, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.
(Retired 31st December, 1956)

Deputy Chief Public Health Inspector

E. J. CONSTABLE, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.
(Promoted 1st January, 1957)

Public Health Inspectors

P. G. ALLSTON, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.
F. J. O. JAMES, M.A.P.H.I.
R. PEEL, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.
(Appointed 1st January, 1957)

(All the Inspectors are qualified Meat Inspectors)

Chief Clerk

F. J. DIX

Clerks

F. V. BATSON	MISS R. E. HOWE
R. J. DARRINGTON	MISS B. COMMINS

Disinfectors, Drain Testers, Rodent Destruction Operators, and Mortuary Attendants

F. WOOTTON	H. W. COMMINS	J. E. MUNDAY
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BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health

I. VITAL STATISTICS

1. Summary of Statistics

Area of Borough (in acres)	...	...	...	...	...	4,972
Population—						
Census 1951	...	...	...	...	...	53,075
Registrar-General's Estimated Home Population for 1956						56,450
Number of Inhabited Houses—						
According to Rate Books (31st December, 1956)					...	17,312
Number of Separate Households—						
Census 1951	...	...	...	...	...	16,301
Rateable Value (December, 1956)				...	...	£883,161
Yield of One Penny Rate (1956)			...	...	...	£3,565

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1956

				Total	Male	Female	Rate per 1,000 population
Live Births—							
Legitimate	...	...		1061	562	499	
Illegitimate	...	...		66	36	30	
				<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
Total	...	...	...	1127	598	529	Birth Rate—
				<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	Crude 20.0
							Corrected 19.4
Stillbirths—							
Legitimate	...	...		23	8	15	
Illegitimate	...	...		1	—	1	
				<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
Total	...	...	...	24	8	16	Rate 0.4
				<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	
Deaths	...	...	...	560	271	289	Death Rate—
							Uncorrected
							9.9
							Corrected
							9.7

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age—						Rate per 1,000
			Total	Male	Female	live births
Legitimate	...	...	17	10	7	
Illegitimate	...	...	1	1	—	
Total	...	...	<u>18</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>7</u>	Rate 16.0

Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age—						Rate per 1,000
			Total	Male	Female	live births
Legitimate	...	...	15	9	6	
Illegitimate	...	...	1	1	—	
Total	...	...	<u>16</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>	Rate 14.1

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth—							
From sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
Other causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

2. Vital Statistics, Bedford, and England and Wales compared

	Bedford	England and Wales*
BIRTHS—		
Live Births	19.4	15.7
Still Births	0.43	0.37
	20.9 (a)	23.0 (a)
DEATHS—		
All causes	9.7	11.7
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	—	0.00
Whooping Cough	—	0.00
Diphtheria	—	0.00
Tuberculosis	0.14	0.12
Influenza... ..	0.04	0.05
Smallpox... ..	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis (including polio- encephalitis)	—	0.00
Pneumonia	0.35	0.50
NOTIFICATIONS (corrected)—		
Typhoid Fever	—	0.00
Paratyphoid Fever	0.02	0.01
Meningococcal Infections	—	0.02
Scarlet Fever	0.57	0.74
Whooping Cough	3.88	2.07
Diphtheria	—	0.00
Erysipelas	0.05	0.10
Smallpox	—	—
Measles	0.87	3.59
Pneumonia	1.16	0.57
Acute Poliomyelitis (including polio- encephalitis)—		
Paralytic	0.02	0.04
Non-paralytic	0.02	0.03
Food Poisoning	0.12	0.24
Puerperal Pyrexia	0.88	0.26
Dysentery	0.07	1.10
	Rates per 1,000 live births	
DEATHS—		
All causes under 1 year of age ...	16.0	23.8(b)
Enteritis and diarrhoea under 2 years of age	0.02	0.5

(a) Per 1,000 Total (live and still) births.

(b) Per 1,000 *related* live births.

* Provisional

3. Population

The population as estimated by the Registrar General for 1956 was 56,450, and as will be seen from the undermentioned table there has been a total increase of population of 2,600 in the last five years on his figures. From local information however, it would appear that the Registrar General has under-estimated, and it would seem that the figure should be in the region of 57,375. The reasons for this are as follows:—

There is now a large foreign element in Bedford. According to the 1951 Census there were 864 aliens in a population of 53,075. At the 31st December, 1955, the number of aliens registered with the Police was 2,962, and the number had increased to 3,304 by the 31st March, 1957. Secondly it is believed that about 300 Jamaicans have moved into the town in the last year or so. Thirdly, various large scale projects in and around Bedford, such as the Royal Aeronautical Establishment, have attracted many workers to the area. As there is no indication of any compensating movement of population out of Bedford it would seem that, at the very least, migration resulted in a net increase in population of 2,500 between the Census and June, 1956.

The excess of births over deaths in this period was in the order of 1,800. It would seem, therefore, that there has been a total increase of not less than 4,300. In other words, it is believed that the population should be in the region of 57,375, rather than the official estimate of 56,450.

This matter has been taken up with the Registrar General and the information given will be borne in mind by him when estimating the population increase for the year 1957.

POPULATION 1951-1956

Year	Population	Increase over previous year	Natural increase	Difference due to excess of immigration over emigration
1951	54,120			
1952	54,400	280	207	73
1953	54,770	370	368	2
1954	55,170	400	463	—63
1955	56,030	860	372	488
1956	56,450	420	567	—147
Total increase, 1951/1956		2,330	1,977	353
Average yearly increase in 5 years		466	395	71

4. Birth Rate

The birth rate for 1956 was 19.4, after multiplying by the comparability factor of 0.97, and that for England and Wales was 15.7. This was the highest local rate since 1947 when the figure was 19.5. The rate for 1955 was 16.6 and the crude rate for the year under review was 19.9.

The total number of live and still births was 1,151.

5. Still Births

The still birth rate for Bedford was 0.43 per 1,000 population which may be compared with 0.33 for England and Wales. The corresponding rates for 1,000 total live and still births were 20.9 and 23.2 respectively. In order to eliminate chance fluctuations the figures over a period of five years are given in the following table, from which it appears, that the average figures vary little from those for the country as a whole.

STILL BIRTH RATES
Bedford and England and Wales, 1952-1956

Year	Per 1,000 population		Per 1,000 total births (live and still)	
	Bedford	England and Wales	Bedford	England and Wales
1952	0.39	0.33	25.0	22.6
1953	0.31	0.35	19.7	22.5
1954	0.51	0.36	28.1	24.0
1955	0.39	0.33	22.4	23.2
1956	0.43	0.37	20.9	23.0
Average 1952 to 1956	0.41	0.35	23.2	23.1

6. Death Rate

The uncorrected death rate was 9.9 as compared with 10.5 for the previous year. To make allowances for age and sex constitution the Registrar-General has allowed correction of this figure by the comparability figure of 0.98 by which a corrected death rate of 9.7 is obtained. The death rate compares very favourably with that for the previous year.

7. Causes of Death

Cause of Death						Males	Females
ALL CAUSES						271	289
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	...	...	...	7	—
2.	Tuberculosis, other	...	...	...	...	—	1
3.	Syphilitic disease	...	...	...	...	—	1
4.	Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	—	—
5.	Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	—	—
6.	Meningococcal infections	...	...	...	...	—	—
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	—	—
8.	Measles	...	...	...	...	—	—
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	...	...	...	...	—	1
10.	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	...	...	...	...	13	10
11.	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	...	...	...	...	16	7
12.	Malignant neoplasm, breast	...	...	...	...	—	8
13.	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	...	...	...	...	—	3
14.	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	...	...	...	...	20	24
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	...	...	...	...	1	1
16.	Diabetes	...	...	...	...	2	1
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	...	...	...	...	20	43
18.	Coronary diseases, angina	...	...	...	...	43	26
19.	Hypertension, with heart disease	...	...	...	...	10	12
20.	Other heart disease	...	...	...	...	24	50
21.	Other circulatory disease	...	...	...	...	11	10
22.	Influenza	...	...	...	...	—	2
23.	Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	9	11
24.	Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	25	13
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	2	2
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	8	3
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	...	...	...	...	3	2
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	...	...	—	2
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	...	...	10	—
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	...	...	...	—	1
31.	Congenital malformations	...	...	...	...	5	1
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	...	...	15	36
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	...	...	...	...	9	1
34.	All other accidents	...	...	...	...	13	14
25.	Suicide	...	...	...	...	5	3
36.	Homicide and operations of war	...	...	...	...	—	—

A few comments may be made on individual causes of deaths. Tuberculosis (numbered 1 and 2 in the list) caused 8 deaths in comparison with 4 in the previous year. Tuberculosis now is becoming a relatively unimportant cause of mortality. No deaths were caused by diphtheria (4), meningococcal infections (6), measles (8), whooping cough (5) or acute poliomyelitis (7). Cancer and allied conditions caused 101 deaths in comparison with 108 in 1955. Of the deaths from cancer 23 were due to cancer of the lung or bronchus, a cause of death that has become more important than tuberculosis. Influenza (22) caused 2 deaths as it did also in the previous year.

Almost half the total number of deaths occurred from those causes which in a general way may be said to represent the degenerative changes of old age; 63 deaths compared with 77 in 1955 were caused by cerebral haemorrhage and similar causes (17); 186 deaths from diseases of the heart and arteries apart from cerebral haemorrhage occurred, compared with 204 in 1955.

The following table shows the number of deaths from motor vehicle and other accidents in the past five years.

	Motor vehicle accidents			All other accidents		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
1952	5	1	6	6	3	9
1953	4	—	4	1	6	7
1954	10	—	10	11	3	14
1955	7	2	9	7	8	15
1956	9	1	10	13	14	27

HOME ACCIDENTS

The above table shows the considerable and increasing importance of home accidents as a cause of death.

If preventable, why not prevented? Many accidents don't just happen; they must occur sooner or later when people neglect to take elementary precautions. Prevention must be based on an analysis of accidents, fatal and non-fatal. The fuller the analysis the more likely it is that preventive measures will be effective, and furthermore it is likely that a home in which there is no fireguard is also one in which medicines and tablets are improperly stored with great risk to the curious toddler.

The problem of fitting and supplying fireguards is under consideration. Many guards are unsuitable or ugly or both, and it is hoped that a satisfactory one designed to our specification can be produced.

Quite a lot is already known about accidents but this knowledge must be more widely and intensively disseminated. This information must be put over to young parents, and I think some preparatory work done at an earlier stage. It is hoped that a body specifically interested in home safety will be formed to play a part in preventing these tragedies.

8. Maternal Mortality

One death occurred in connection with pregnancy and childbirth, giving a mortality rate of 0.87 per 1,000 (live and still) births.

This rate is statistically unsound as the population on which it is based is too small. There can be no intermediate rate between that of 0 per 1,000 and 0.87 per 1,000 which is comparatively high.

9. Infant Mortality

The total number of infant deaths was 18, of which 11 were male and 7 female, giving an infant mortality rate of 16.0 per 1,000 live births over the year, which may be compared with 23.8 per 1,000 related births, the figure for England and Wales.

The table for the past five years given below shows that the figures for Bedford compare well with those for the country as a whole.

DEATH RATE PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS

Year			Bedford	England and Wales
1952	...	...	19.5	27.6
1953	...	...	23.6	26.8
1954	...	...	20.6	25.5
1955	...	...	18.8	24.9
1956	...	...	16.0	23.6
Average 1952-1956			19.7	25.7

Immaturity or premature birth is an important cause of infantile mortality. The following list shows the ages at death of the 10 infants who died from this cause.

30 minutes	...	1	0-24 hours	...	7	Under 1 year	...	10
2 hours	...	1						
7 hours	...	1						
9 hours	...	1						
10 hours	...	1						
15 hours	...	1						
21 hours	...	1						
1 day	...	1	Under 7 days	...	3			
2 days	...	1						
3 days	...	1						

The number of neo-natal deaths, or those occurring under one month was 16 corresponding to a rate of 14.2 per 1,000 live births, which may be compared with 14.6, the figure for the previous year.

INFANT MORTALITY BY SEX AND CAUSE

Cause	Under one month		Total (under one month)	Over one month but under one year		Total (under one year)
	M	F		M	F	
Gastro-enteritis ...	—	—	—	1	—	1
Congenital malformations	2	—	2	—	—	2
Immaturity (associated immaturity)... ..	6	4	10	—	—	10
Haemolytic disease ...	—	1	1	—	—	1
Other causes	3	1	4	—	—	4

NOTE.—These figures compiled from local records, while agreeing in total with those of the Registrar-General, show a difference in the numbers by sex.

II. PREVENTION OF ILLNESS

1. Preventive Medicine

The individual will have to bear an increasing amount of responsibility for the prevention of disease by modifying his pattern of living. To do this he will need a far better understanding of elementary physiology, hygiene, the prevention of accidents, and the importance of family relationships in the sphere of mental health. Recent surveys, both of adults and school children, have shown that large gaps occur in the basic information necessary to secure the intelligent co-operation of the public. To meet this need and to equip the coming generations research into the knowledge required and the best methods of inculcating it is necessary. However, I am convinced that a great deal more could be done with what is already available. This educational process should be carried out more particularly towards the end of the school career, and there is evidence that these children are ready and receptive to such teaching. Obviously this development will call for teamwork between those who see the difficulties of adults (doctors, health visitors and social workers) and professional teachers. Adult education fails, I think, because one is mainly preaching to the converted and because the difficulties of explaining health problems to someone with negligible background information can only be appreciated by those who have made the attempt.

That a more positive approach is needed can be demonstrated by the fact that the benefits of full employment, rehousing and the welfare state, measures that should have benefited the unskilled and semi-skilled in comparison with the skilled, have in fact failed to do so. The failure is largely one of utilisation: the unskilled family in the mass makes less use of immunisation, vaccination, vitamin supplements and clinic facilities, and treatment prescribed by the family doctor is less often carried out effectively.

2. Cardio-Vascular Disease

Clotting of the blood in arteries and brain, conditions known as coronary thrombosis and cerebral thrombosis are an important cause of death, and many of the victims are those whose experience and attainment are of great value to the community. Whilst the causation is probably very complex avoidable factors of importance in predisposing to the disease are:—

- (i) Consumption of an increasing amount of fat.
- (ii) Inadequate exercise.
- (iii) Obesity.
- (iv) Heavy smoking.

Many adults of today are undergoing the discomforts of dieting—being faced with an excess of weight of one to three stones or more. Early diagnosis is of great importance: often the weight increase is beginning in the mid to late thirties: the balance between energy intake and expenditure has been upset by perhaps a moderate amount of increased intake in conjunction with a reduction of exercise. At this stage the excess is noticeable only by tightness of clothing at the waist and by the increase of weight shown on the scales. This is the time at which to become calorie conscious and cut down butter, margarine, cream, ice cream, pastry, etc., and excess carbohydrate in the form of potatoes and bread: to increase exercise by walking where possible in preference to using the bus or car, and try to play some active game regularly.

The problem is not purely one of losing weight, which can re-appear only too easily, but of building up a better, healthier pattern of living.

3. Smoking, and Lung Cancer and Other Diseases

1. The number of deaths from lung cancer has risen from 2,286 in 1931 to 17,271 in 1955.

2. Statistically there is an association between lung cancer and smoking and between the amount smoked and the risk—the greater the amount the greater the risk. (See opposite showing cigarette consumption and lung cancer figures).

3. As usually some 20-30 years of smoking elapses before lung cancer develops it will be seen that unless the older age groups can reduce very substantially, or better, give up smoking, the figures will continue to rise.

4. Several potential cancer producing substances are present in tobacco (i.e., either known to produce cancer in man or in experimental animals). One of these, benzpyrene, is also present in the contaminated air in towns.

5. The part played by contaminated air in adding to the hazard is supported by the available figures. There is not any basis, however, for thinking that this is anything but minor contributory cause.

6. Lung cancer rarely affects non-smokers, only 7 out of 1,357 consecutive cases in fact. On the basis of present information it would seem reasonable to suspect that the inhalation of other people's tobacco smoke in conjunction with the atmospheric pollution by smoke (domestic and industrial) and fumes from the internal combustion engines are the responsible factors. It is therefore imperative to ask ourselves whether smoking in cinemas, theatres, etc. should be discouraged. In my opinion it warrants the most careful examination.

7. Over 80% of the cases at present discovered are not suitable for curative treatment. The mortality amongst those treated is still very high.

8. Until all the substances causing cancer present in the cigarette can be effectively removed or de-toxified the deaths will continue. This will take some years.

9. There is evidence that the mortalities from chronic bronchitis, pulmonary tuberculosis and coronary thrombosis are higher for smokers than non-smokers. Patients suffering from the above diseases are ill-advised to continue smoking.

10. It is important, therefore, to

- (a) Get long-term smokers to cut their consumption.
- (b) If they have symptoms to seek advice early.
- (c) To discourage young people from starting this habit by putting the facts before them.
- (d) Air pollution by smoke (domestic and industrial), and petrol and diesel engines should be drastically reduced by utilising to the full the Clean Air Act and other available legislation.
- (e) The standard of maintenance of diesel engines is too low and dense clouds of black smoke are all too common. This is an infringement of the law.

11. No doubt Life Assurance Companies will be radically altering their premiums for smokers when they consider that one in eight of life-long heavy smokers (cigarettes) die of lung cancer and that the general death rate of men smoking rises from 34% higher at ten per day than for non-smokers, for those smoking 20-40 96% higher, and for those exceeding 40 123% higher.

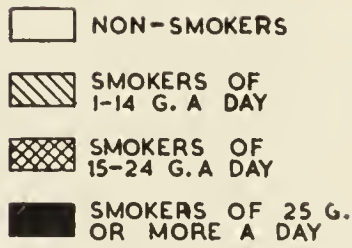
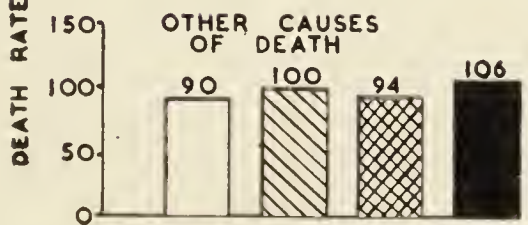
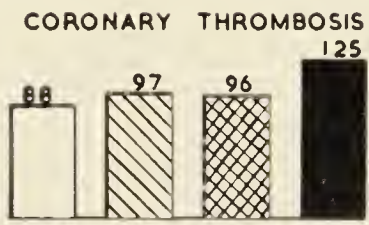
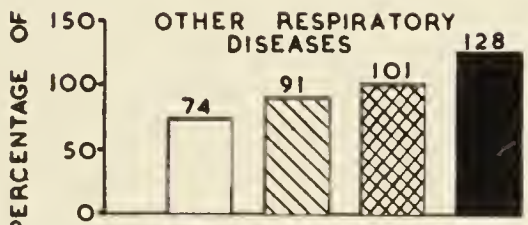
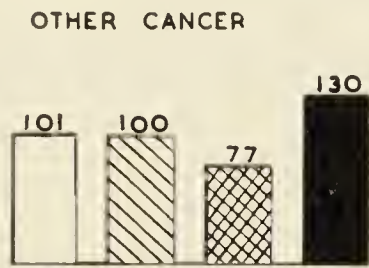
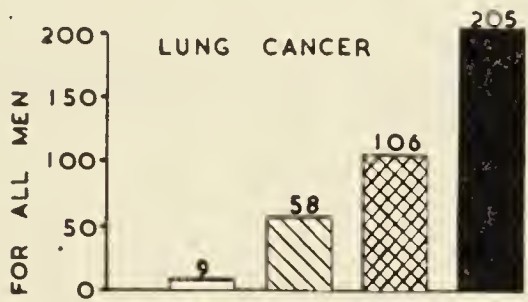
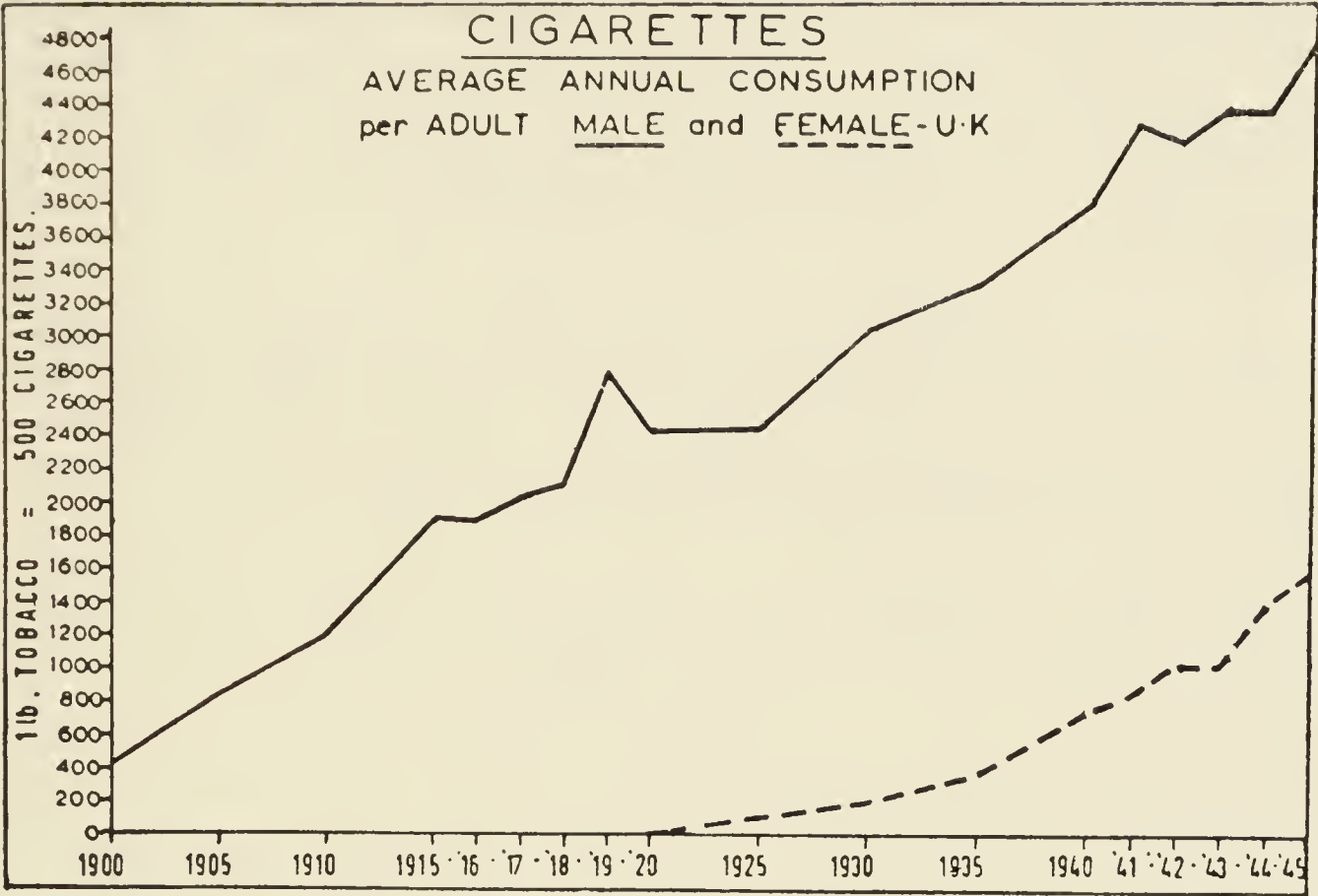
12. It may be argued that if people want to spend some £1,500 in killing themselves this is their own affair. It should be pointed out that precious dollars are being used for these purchases and that the total cost to the country is considerable.

13. Non-smokers (and many have given up the habit) may well ask why they should have to pay for this self-inflicted disease and put forward the suggestion that some additional taxation on tobacco be levied to foot the bill.

14. The tobacco interests have been defending themselves and I have had their literature. The explanation they put forward that this cancer rate is genetically determined is fantastically unlikely, for it assumes that the genetic predisposition also determines whether pipe or cigarette is smoked and whether you live in town or country, and also

that the genetic predisposition has only recently begun to affect the female sex. Furthermore the genetic predisposition must be less in those who are going to give up smoking ! Naturally the tobacco companies, the addicts and the shareholders will cling to any straws, but the public should not be misled by inspired propaganda. Opinions are aired by all and sundry but this is an extremely complex problem requiring both medical and statistical knowledge.

SMOKING AND HEALTH



III. SOCIAL CONDITIONS

It has been the custom in former years to comment on the influx of Poles, Italians and Central European refugees under this heading, and latterly there has been an influx of coloured immigrants from the West Indies. The same pattern of problems arises with regard to housing and social assimilation, though in the case of the West Indians these are in some respects more easily solved as they are British subjects and are by temperament a happy people; yet colour does introduce a complicating factor.

Of greater importance is that in 1955 57,000 people emigrated to Australia, and enquiries in the first half of this year from a further 50,000 represent some 150,000 individuals. Emigration to Canada in 1956 was over 51,000. These figures include many highly trained persons. The importance of this loss of personnel, no less than the disquiet reflected by the number of enquiries, at a time when the shortage of graduates and technicians is causing great anxiety for the future, particularly when viewed in comparison with what is being done in the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., should sound a warning note. New programmes for technical and scientific education are not likely to achieve their aim if an increasing percentage of those trained disappear out of this country. There is dis-satisfaction amongst large numbers of professional people with the opportunities in this country, largely because they see that their numbers are inadequate to weigh heavily with any political party. Standards of professional integrity in this country have been of the highest and have played a part in setting a pattern for society, but not a few are now worried that these are possibly now on the decline, though this would be hard to assess as yet.

Some further comments are made under the heading 'Conclusion'.

IV. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. General

With few exceptions all houses have an internal water supply and are connected with the sewers.

2. Water Supply

(A) QUALITY AND QUANTITY

I am indebted to the Water Engineer, Mr. A. B. Beardmore, for the following information relating to the water supply.

- (i) The water supply to the Borough has been satisfactory both in quality and quantity.
- (ii) A summary of the results of bacteriological examinations of the raw water and of the water going into supply is given below:—

BACTERIOLOGICAL RESULTS, 1956

Source	No. of samples	Presumptive coliforms			B. Coli, Type I			Plate counts		
		% positive	% with 1800+ orgs.	Av. orgs. per 100 ml.	% positive	% with 1800+ orgs.	Av. orgs. per 100 ml.	No. of samples	Av. orgs. per ml.	
									37° C.	22° C.
<i>Raw water</i> ...	52	100	30.8	1,322	100	7.7	687	52	539	2,685
<i>Treated water :</i>										
Before (48 hrs.) storage ...	240	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	37†	9	12
Outlet to town	426	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	59	10	9
<i>Mains water :</i>										
Town samples after repairs ; from new mains, etc. ...	270	15.5*	Nil	—	Nil	Nil	Nil	—	—	—

† Not taken when reservoirs were under repair.

* Represents 17 positives from new mains not in supply,
22 repeats of positives,
2 faulty samples from standpipes,
1 positive due to a fault in a private softening system.

- (iii) Water not likely to have plumbo-solvent action. 25 samples taken during the year contained no measurable amount of lead.
- (iv) Final chlorination at the works produces a free chlorine residual of 0.6-0.8 p.p.m. after at least 4 hours. There is subsequent storage for about 2 days and a second bacteriological check before going into supply.

All work on old and new mains is followed by chlorination and check bacteriological sampling by the Water Undertaking's staff.

The following table shows the results of chemical analyses of the raw water and fully treated water.

BOROUGH OF BEDFORD—WATER DEPARTMENT

CHEMICAL ANALYSES, YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1956

	Raw water		Water into supply	
	Range	Average	Range	Average
pH	7.7–8.4	7.95	7.3–7.7	7.5
Turbidity (silica scale)	10–190	29	Less than 1.0–4.0	Less than 1.0
Colour (hazen units)	10–160	31	1.0–10	Less than 5.0
Carbonate alkalinity	142–280	227	144–272	217
Non-carbonate hardness	92–196	138	100–236	140
Total hardness	280–430	365	282–406	367
Free carbon dioxide	2.1–11.0	5.3	8.5–21	14
Total solids	—	566	—	555
Chlorine in Chlorides	26–39	34	31–42	36
Conductivity (reciprocal megohms per c.c. at 20°)	530–785	696	560–800	700
Ammonia (free and saline)	0.02–0.95	0.11	trace to 0.1	0.01
Ammonia—albuminoid	0.17–1.8	0.38	0.1 to 0.56	0.14
Nitrites as N.	—	0.05	Nil	Nil
Nitrates as N.	1.1–6.0	3.3	1.0–4.3	2.8
O ₂ absorbed in 4 hrs. at 26.7° C....	1.4–6.0	3.0	0.6–2.5	1.3
Iron	0.02–3.0	0.1	Less than 0.05	Less than 0.05
Copper	Trace	Trace	Trace to 0.1	Less than 0.05
Lead	—	Nil	Nil	Nil
Zinc	—	Nil	Nil	Nil
Calcium	106–142	132	105–148	129
Magnesium	4.0–14.5	8	5.5–14	8
Fluorine as F.	0.18–0.45	0.28	0.18–0.44	0.26
Sulphates	41–140	115	112–138	115
Silica	1–17	9	1–14	7
Phosphates	0.1–0.57	0.37	0.12–0.26	0.19
Aluminium	—	—	Trace to 0.1	Less than 0.1
Anionic detergent (as Manoxol O.T. after Longwell and Maniece)	0.1 to 0.65	0.35	Trace to 0.55	0.21

Results in parts per million.

Estimation of Detergents after Longwell and Maniece as recommended by the Synthetic Detergents Committee.

There was no change in the scheme of taking water samples for examination in the Public Health Laboratory.

The following table shows the result of these examinations.

BACTERIOLOGICAL RESULTS, 1956 FULLY TREATED WATER

No. of samples of water in the course of distribution	Presumptive coliforms		Faecal coliforms	
	Pos.	av. orgs. per 100 ml.	Pos.	av. orgs. per 100 ml.
268	3	7	—	—

Cases where coliforms are found are referred to the Water Department for further investigations. No evidence of pollution dangerous to health was discovered.

Safety

Waterworks personnel are, where appropriate, submitted to blood tests to exclude the possibility of any being carriers of typhoid.

(B) UNTREATED RAW WATER

44 samples were taken from the Borough Pumping Station. The following table shows the results of these samples.

Presumptive coliforms per 100 ml.		Faecal coliforms per 100 ml.	
Highest	Lowest	Highest	Lowest
18,000+	50	3,500	11

The results are to be expected for a low-land river such as the Ouse.

(C) SUPPLY TO DWELLING HOUSES

All houses are supplied from public water mains direct except 7 houses by 2 wells and 12 supplied by 7 standpipes.

(D) SWIMMING BATHS AND PADDLING POOL

Samples were taken from six officially controlled or generally recognised bathing places in the river and one paddling pool. The results are as follows.

No. of samples	Presumptive coliforms per 100 ml.		Faecal coliforms per 100 ml.	
	Highest	Lowest	Highest	Lowest
91	18,000+	25	18,000+	25

The results are comparable to those shown above of samples taken of the raw water before treatment at the waterworks.

In my opinion these results are not satisfactory and an increasing volume of the flow is derived from sewage effluents.

The River Ouse, Newnham and Commercial Road Swimming Pools

Bacteriological contamination was shown by repeated sampling to be increasing, and I therefore reported on this water to the appropriate Committee of the Borough Council who have installed apparatus to chlorinate the water at Newnham. I also reported to the Divisional Executive for Education, who restricted official school swimming to the chlorinated Newnham pool.

V. HOUSING

1. General

For details of the work carried out under the Housing and Public Health Acts reference is made to the report of the Chief Public Health Inspector.

The following list shows in summary form the work undertaken in dealing with totally unfit houses or parts of houses.

UNFIT DWELLINGS

Number of houses or parts of houses represented to Local Authority as unfit and incapable of being made fit at a reasonable expense	78
Number of houses represented in 1956 or in a previous year in respect of which demolition orders were made	3
Number of houses or parts of houses represented in 1956 or a previous year, on which Closing Orders made became operative	2
Number of houses demolished—	
(a) As a result of Demolition Order	1
(b) By arrangement with owner	—
(c) Corporation property	12

2. New Units of Accommodation

During the years 1945 to 1956 the following numbers and type of new units of accommodation were completed.

NEW DWELLINGS AND CONVERSIONS, 1945-1956

	(1) Prefabricated Dwellings (Council)		(2) Permanent Dwellings (Council)	(3) Permanent houses erected by builders	(4) Conversions: Houses into flats		(5) Other adapta- tions. Additional units of accommo- dation	(6) Total additional units of accommo- dation provided
	Tem- porary	Perma- nent			(i)	(ii)		
1945-1955 totals	180	158	1,773	603	122	278	8	2,878
1956	—	—	167*	187	10	20	6	370
Totals ...	180	158	1,940	790	132	298	14	3,248

NOTES—The totals in column (6) are obtained by adding the figures in columns (1), (2), (3) and (5) as they stand, and in the case of column (4) by subtracting the figures in column (i) from those in column (ii) to find the number to be included in the total. This last procedure may not always be quite accurate, but gives a sufficient approximation.

* For Sale 31. To Rent 36.

3. Housing Requirements

I am informed by the Housing Manager that the number of applicants for houses on the books of the Corporation at the end of the year was 1,783. In spite of the large number of houses built since the war the number of applicants for houses shows no permanent reduction.

VI. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

1. Milk

(A) DAIRIES AND DISTRIBUTORS

The following table gives the register of dairies and distributors as it stood at the end of the year.

Premises registered as dairies in the area	...	...	14
Milk distributors registered in area—			
(i) trading from premises within area	...	...	32*
(ii) trading from premises outside area only	...	...	4
			—
Total	...	...	36
			—

* Includes 17 shops in which main trade is grocery and provisions.

(B) MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATION) (RAW MILK) REGULATIONS, 1949 MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATION) (PASTEURISED AND STERILISED MILK) REGULATIONS, 1949

The following table shows the licences granted under the above named Orders.

			Number of Licences
			Raw Milk Pasteurised Milk
Tuberculin Tested—Dealers	...	...	17 33*†
Supplementary	...	...	4 4

The following table shows the results of the laboratory examinations of specially designated milk. To speak generally the results obtained from samples of specially designated milk are satisfactory. When any failure to maintain the required standard occurs the Inspector is ready to advise.

Source	Grade	No. of samples	Satisfactory	Not satisfactory
Dairy ...	Pasteurised	15	15	—
	T.T. Pasteurised	12	12	—
Roundsmen ...	Pasteurised	8	8	—
	T.T. Pasteurised	8	8	—
Schools ...	Pasteurised	92	89	3
	T.T. Pasteurised	7	2	5
Totals ...	...	142	134	8

Investigations were undertaken in the cases of samples reported upon as not satisfactory and subsequent samples were satisfactory.

* Two of these licences were in respect of establishments in the area at which pasteurising was carried out. All the dealers dealt in Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised) Milk.

† Includes one business subsequently incorporated in another local firm whereby the premises were closed.

2. Meat

(A) INSPECTION

The following table shows the number of carcasses inspected and the meat condemned during the year.

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED, 1956

	Cattle (exclud- ing cows)	Cows	Calves	Sheep and lambs	Pigs	Total
Number killed and in- spected	2,601	257	1,185	6,727	6,862	17,632
<i>All diseases except tuber- culosis—</i> Whole carcasses con- demned	1	3	3	9	8	24
Carcasses of which some part of organ was condemned ...	558	46	4	72	1,140	1,820
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	21.49	19.06	0.59	1.20	16.73	10.45
<i>Tuberculosis only—</i> Whole carcasses con- demned	1	1	—	—	1	3
Carcasses of which some part of organ was condemned ...	117	23	—	—	44	184
Percentage of number inspected affected with tuberculosis	4.54	9.34	—	—	0.66	1.06

MEAT WEIGHT CONDEMNED

The following table shows the total weight of diseased and unsound home killed meat condemned in 1956.

Class of Animal	Tuberculosis			Other Diseases			Total lbs.
	Whole Carcase	Part Carcase and Offal	lbs.	Whole Carcase	Part Carcase and Offal	lbs.	
Cattle (excluding Cows) ...	1	117	4,866	1	558	7,657	12,523
Cows ...	1	23	1,401	3	46	1,965	3,366
Calves ...	—	—	—	3	4	448	448
Sheep and Lambs ...	—	—	—	9	72	752	752
Pigs ...	1	4	763	8	1,140	3,745	4,508
Totals ...	3	184	7,030	24	1,820	14,567	21,597

(B) SLAUGHTERHOUSES

Eight slaughterhouses were licensed by the Council for use by private butchers.

(C) SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT, 1933

SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1954

At the end of December, 1956, there were 31 slaughtermen licensed under these Acts.

3. Other Foods

The following table shows the amount of foods condemned:—

Class of food	lbs.
Bacon ...	29
Cheese ...	178
Cooked Meats ...	44
Ice Cream ...	30
Imported Meat ...	1,018
Fish ...	196
Lobsters ...	6
Sausages ...	22
Shell Fish ...	1½
Tinned Goods—various commodities (2,558 containers)	4,373½
Total lbs. ...	5,898

The bulk of this unfit food was used for animal feeding purposes, but that which was unsuitable for this purpose was buried at controlled tipping refuse sites.

4. Ice Cream

The following statement shows the number of premises registered under the Food and Drugs Act for the sale of ice cream.

PREMISES REGISTERED

Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Sale of ice cream manufactured elsewhere	...	...	...	...	...	...	169
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	<u>172</u>

The following table shows the results of testing of ice cream in accordance with the agreed bacterial standards.

						Number of samples	Percentage in grades
Grade 1	...	...	...	...	...	25	73.5%
Grade 2	...	...	...	...	...	9	26.5%
Grade 3	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Grade 4	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Total	...	...	...	...	...	<u>34</u>	

5. Adulteration of Foods

(A) SAMPLES SENT TO PUBLIC ANALYST

Sixty samples of milk and 38 samples of other foods and medicinal preparations were submitted to the Public Analyst.

A summary of samples procured is shown in the following table:—

TABLE OF SAMPLES TAKEN

Commodity				Number of samples						Total
				Formal			Informal			
				Gen- uine	Adult- erated	Total	Gen- uine	Adult- erated	Total	
Black Pudding	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Bronchial Mixture	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	1	1	1
Butter	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Cornflour	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Cough Mixture	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Cream of Tartar	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Custard Powder	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Devon Gingerbreads	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Fruit Chutney	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Glycerine	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Ground Ginger	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Ground Nutmeg	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Halibut Liver Oil Capsules	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Horseradish Relish	...	...	...	—	—	—	2	—	2	2
Ice Cream	...	...	...	—	—	—	2	—	2	2
Infant's Powders	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Lard	...	...	...	—	—	—	2	—	2	2
Lemon Crystals	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Lemon Curd	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Margarine	...	...	...	—	—	—	4	—	4	4
Milk	...	...	...	59	—	59	—	—	—	59
Mint Sauce	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Olive Oil	...	...	...	—	—	—	2	—	2	2
Pork Pie	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Sausage—										
Beef	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Pork	...	...	...	—	—	—	2	—	2	2
Self-Raising Flour	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Table Jelly	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Tartaric Acid	...	...	...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
Vinegar	...	...	...	—	1	1	—	1	1	2
Milk—bottle broken in transit				—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Totals	...	...	...	59	1	61	35	2	37	98

ADULTERATED SAMPLES

Serial Number of sample		Commodity	Nature of adulteration	Remarks
Formal	Informal			
C 600		Vinegar	Eelworms. 16% deficient in acetic acid	Vendors warned. Remaining stock with- drawn from sale
	C 701	Vinegar	Eelworms 16% deficient in acetic acid	See above. Sample sub- mitted by customer of shop
	C 729	Bronchial Mixture	Deficient in sucrose by 13%	Vendors warned. Remaining stock with- drawn from sale

(B) GERBER TESTING OF MILK

Samples of milk are also tested in the Public Health Department by the Gerber Test, which gives a rapid indication of the quality of the milk tested and enables the Inspector either to give advice to the retailer or producer, or to take further samples for submission to the Public Analyst.

The following are the figures for the year.

Total number tested	...	...	...	3
Satisfactory	...	...	2	
Not satisfactory	...	...	1	

(C) UNSOUND FOOD, OR OTHERWISE NOT UP TO STANDARD

In addition to the articles sent to the Public Analyst, the following table gives a list of food, unsound or unsatisfactory in other ways, to which the Public Health Committee give consideration.

Article of Food	Source of Complaint	Nature of Contamination	Action Taken
Bread	Private individual	Foreign substance in bread	Vendor cautioned
Bread	Private individual	Foreign substance in bread	Vendor cautioned
Sugar	Private individual	Portion of smoked cigarette in packet	Manufacturers advised —evidence destroyed before reported to Public Health Department
Sausage rolls	Private individual	Mould	Vendors cautioned
Pork pies	Private individual	Mould	Vendors and manufacturers cautioned
Flour	Private individual	Maggot	Vendors prosecuted Fined £25.
Pork pie	Private individual	Mould	Vendor prosecuted. Fined £25.
Swiss roll	Private individual	Very mouldy	Vendors prosecuted. Fined £5.
Bread	Private individual	Insect	Vendor cautioned
Pre-packed sweets	Local Authority	Insect	Manufacturers advised
Pork pie	Private individual	Mould	Vendor prosecuted. Fined £5.

In addition to the above other articles of food were submitted by members of the public which on examination were found to be fit for human consumption.

(D) OTHER FOOD COMPLAINTS

Article of Food	Source of Complaint	Nature of Complaint	Action Taken
Fish	Private individual	Cod supplied with chips at local cafe when plaice and chips ordered	Warning letter sent.
Medicine	Private individual	Bronchial mixture causing illness	Prescription issued by Doctor under National Health Service Act and dispensed by Chemist. After enquiries no further action taken
Rye bread	Doctor	Illness caused to patient by possible ergot content.	Bread examined for presence of ergot—negative results. No further action taken

VII. PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

1. Infectious Diseases, other than Tuberculosis

(A) GENERAL STATISTICS

The following table shows in summary form the number of infectious diseases notified during the year, together with the number of deaths from these diseases.

DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1956

Disease	Total cases notified	Total deaths registered
Scarlet Fever	32	--
Whooping Cough	220	—
Diphtheria	—	—
Measles	48	—
Acute Pneumonia	77	20
Meningococcal Infection	—	--
Acute Poliomyelitis—		
Paralytic	1	—
Non-Paralytic	1	—
Acute Encephalitis—		
Infective	—	—
Post Infectious	—	—
Dysentery	4	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	5	--
Puerperal Pyrexia	50	—
Smallpox	—	—
Paratyphoid Fever	1	—
Typhoid Fever	—	—
Food Poisoning	7	—
Jaundice	95	2
Erysipelas	3	—
Malaria	—	—
Influenzal Meningitis (Local requirement only)	—	—

The following table gives the number of infectious diseases notified divided into groups of age and sex.

	Scarlet fever		Whoop- ing cough		Acute poliomyelitis				Measles		Dip- theria		Dysen- tery		Menin- gococ- cal infect- ion	
					Paraly- tic		Non- para- lytic									
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1 year ...	—	—	10	5	—	—	—	—	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 year ...	1	—	10	5	—	—	—	—	5	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
2 years ...	—	2	9	13	1	—	—	—	5	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
3 years ...	—	1	20	9	—	—	—	—	2	9	—	—	—	—	—	—
4 years ...	—	3	13	18	—	—	—	—	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-9 years...	13	10	49	41	—	—	—	—	10	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
10-14 years ...	1	1	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
15-24 years ...	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
25 years and over	—	—	—	9	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Age unknown ...	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total (all ages)	15	17	115	105	1	—	1	—	25	23	—	—	2	2	—	—

	Acute pneumonia		Smallpox		Acute Encephalitis				Enteric or typhoid fever		Paratyphoid fevers	
					Infective		Post-infectious					
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 5 years ...	4	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-14 years ...	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-44 years ...	13	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
45 to 64 years ...	13	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 years and over ...	15	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Age unknown...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total (all ages) ...	47	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—

	Erysipelas		Food poisoning		Puerperal Pyrexia		Ophthalmia neonatorum		Jaundice		Malaria	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 5 years ...	—	—	1	—	—	—	3	2	3	6	—	—
5-14 years ...	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	29	37	—	—
15-44 years ...	1	—	1	3	—	50	—	—	8	8	—	—
45-64 years ...	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	2	2	—	—
65 years and over ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Age unknown...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total (all ages) ...	2	1	2	5	—	50	3	2	42	53	—	—

(B) INDIVIDUAL DISEASES

Scarlet Fever

During the year 32 cases of scarlet fever were notified compared with 18 in the previous year, giving a case rate of 0.57 compared with 0.74 for England and Wales. Scarlet fever is now regarded as a very mild complaint and very seldom does a severe case occur.

Whooping Cough

220 cases were notified, giving a case rate of 3.88. This complaint was epidemic in the country as a whole.

Diphtheria

No cases have occurred in the Borough for the past nine years, none being notified in the year under review.

The practical elimination of this disease may probably in the main be attributed to the immunisation of children from birth and during their school life. It is estimated that 80.3% children in Bedford have been immunised, and in 1956, 695 children were given a full course of treatment (or primary course) and 804 children received reinforcing (or booster) injections.

Measles

The number of cases of measles was 48, a very large decrease on those notified for the previous year.

It seems that now-a-days measles becomes epidemic every two years.

Pneumonia

77 cases of pneumonia were notified with 20 deaths, similar figures to the previous year.

Meningococcal Infections

No cases occurred.

Poliomyelitis

Two cases of poliomyelitis were notified, one paralytic and one non-paralytic.

Dysentery

Only four cases were notified.

Food Poisoning

The number of food poisoning notifications received was low, 7 only having been received.

Jaundice

95 cases were notified, a very large increase over the previous year. This disease is notifiable at the present time only in the eastern area of England, and all notifications are sent to the Regional Medical Officer for his information. Local enquiries do not, as a rule, lead to any fruitful results. Two deaths occurred from this disease.

Puerperal Pyrexia

50 cases occurred, and most of these were notified by a local hospital. It is not necessarily an alarming condition but is notified in accordance with the Regulations.

2. Tuberculosis

The following table shows the number of new cases and the number of deaths in their age groups.

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CASES AND DEATHS

Age Periods					New Cases				* Deaths			
					Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
					M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	...	...	...	...	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	...	...	...	...	1	1	2	—	—	—	—	—
20	...	...	...	...	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
25	...	...	...	...	2	2	2	—	—	—	—	—
35	...	...	...	...	6	4	—	—	1	1	—	—
45	...	...	...	...	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55	...	...	...	...	5	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
65 and upwards	...	...	...	...	4	2	—	—	4	—	—	—
Totals					23	12	4	—	7	1	—	—

*NOTE.—These figures, compiled from local records, while agreeing in total with those of the Registrar-General, show a variation in cause of death.

The death rate was 0.14 per thousand which may be compared with the rate of 0.12 for England and Wales.

TUBERCULOSIS—CASES NOTIFIED DURING LAST 5 YEARS

Year	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Total
	M	F	M	F	
1952	38	33	5	2	78
1953	48	25	3	4	80
1954	25	26	1	7	59
1955	27	34	3	7	71
1956	23	12	4	—	39

The following table for the last 5 years shows the decline in the death rate which has taken place in the country generally. The preceding table shows a notable decrease in the cases notified,

TUBERCULOSIS DEATH RATES

Year	All forms			Respiratory			Non-respiratory		
	No. in Bedford	Rate per 1,000		No. in Bedford	Rate per 1,000		No. in Bedford	Rate per 1,000	
		Bedford	England and Wales		Bedford	England and Wales		Bedford	England and Wales
1952	9	0.17	0.24	9	0.17	0.21	0	—	0.04
1953	8	0.15	0.20	8	0.15	0.18	0	—	0.02
1954	6	0.11	0.18	6	0.11	0.16	0	—	0.02
1955	4	0.07	0.15	2	0.04	0.13	2	0.04	0.01
*1956	8	0.14	0.12	8	0.14	0.11	0	—	0.01
Average 1952-56	7	0.13	0.18	7	0.12	0.16	0.4	0.01	0.02

**NOTE.—These figures, compiled from local records, while agreeing in total with those of the Registrar-General, show a variation in cause of death.*

3. Poliomyelitis Research

Following a request from the Public Health Laboratory Service investigations into the prevalence of poliomyelitis virus in the faeces of normal children have been made and are still in progress. Parents of young children have been approached by members of the Public Health Department to provide samples and have co-operated excellently.

4. Poliomyelitis Vaccination

The Ministry of Health, in March, 1956, brought into being a scheme for poliomyelitis vaccination of children born in the years 1947-1954. The arrangements for vaccination in Bedford were made by the Local Health Authority (Bedfordshire County Council). Owing to the small amount of vaccine available the number of vaccinations carried out was not high, and also on account of the possible risk during the summer and autumn when poliomyelitis is normally prevalent the scheme was discontinued temporarily in June. Details of the work carried out in Bedford are as follows:

5. Verminous Infestation

Since the end of the war scabies has disappeared from the Borough so that the Cleansing Station is now confined to treating cases of verminous infestation either of bodies or of heads. The services are available on payment by the Local Education Authority and by other sanitary districts of the County. Their use is now limited to exceptional cases where for some reason or other verminous infestation has got out of

hand or cleansing cannot be expected to be carried out by the person affected or by the parents of children.

The following table shows the work carried out during the year.

NUMBER OF PERSONS AND VERMINOUS HEADS EXAMINED AND TREATED AT THE CLEANSING STATION DURING 1956

	Bedford	County
Pre-School Children	—	2
School Children	6	11
Adults	2	—

(County cases: 7 school children were repeat cases. Borough cases: 2 school children were repeat cases).

VIII. NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948
SECTION 47

1. Persons in Need of Care and Attention

This Section provides for the necessary care and attention of persons who

(a) are suffering from grave chronic disease or, being aged and infirm or physically incapacitated, are living in insanitary conditions, and

(b) are unable to devote to themselves, and are not receiving from other persons, proper care and attention.

The following table shows the present position with regard to two elderly persons who were removed to Hospital on Magistrates' Orders.

Number of case	Sex	Age	Conditions found on inspection	Remarks
2-53	F	86	Widow, living alone, crippled and unable to walk. Loss of bowel control.	Removed to hospital on Magistrate's Order in May, 1953, and retained on renewal of Order.
5/55	F	84	Living alone. In very poor state of health	Removed to hospital on Magistrate's Order on 10th May, 1955, and retained on renewal of Order until 26/1/56, when she voluntarily agreed to remain in hospital. Died 12/3/56

5 new cases were investigated during the year as follows:—

Case No.	Sex	Age	Conditions found on inspection	Action	Remarks
1/56	M	87	Living alone, bedridden	Voluntarily removed to hospital	Under Observation
2/56	M	87	Living alone, practically deaf and blind		
3/56	M	80	Living alone, bedridden	Voluntarily removed to hospital	Died in hospital, 5/9/56
4/56	M	82	Living alone, bedridden	House clean, Dr. and Home Help in attendance	
5/56	F	67	Living alone. House in filthy condition		Under Observation

2. Care of the Aged

The care of the aged continues to occupy a good deal of the time of the staff of the Public Health Department. When old people are not receiving adequate care from their families or other persons the policy is of bringing all services to bear, including those administered by the County Council, to prevent such deterioration of conditions as would make removal to hospital necessary.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS

(A) MORTUARY

The following table shows the work done in connection with the Mortuary. The total number of bodies received, 140, showed an increase on that of the previous year, 119. Seventy two of the bodies received came from outside areas.

BODIES RECEIVED

Post mortems carried out			Post mortems not carried out		
Bodies received from Borough	Bodies received from other areas	Total	Bodies received from Borough	Bodies received from other areas	Total
64	72	136	4	—	4

Total bodies received—140

(B) DOMESTIC BATHS, COMMERCIAL ROAD

The following table shows the attendances made during the year as compared with 1955.

				1956	1955
Men	...	...	...	1,240	1,094
Women	...	...	...	549	503
				<hr/>	<hr/>
	Total	...	...	1,789	1,597
				<hr/>	<hr/>

It will be observed that there is an increase of 192 attendances in the 1956 figures over those for the previous year.

X. CONCLUSION

In the section on Social Conditions comment was made on the emigration of skilled personnel.

How important is this loss of doctors, engineers and others? This obviously depends on two factors; (1) how many, and (2) why are they going? I tried to find out how many doctors have emigrated and failed. But as to why they are going, this is complex, but there is a feeling amongst professional groups that the deterioration of their position will continue.

Bearing in mind the section on Social Conditions, it was with great interest that I read the Winchester address by Mr. Graham Hutton, the economist, an extract of which I give below.

‘ So at both the superficially seeming opposite poles of world politics today, in North America and in Soviet Russia, really substantial differential rewards for differential responsibilities and differential expertness were the order of the day; while British society lagged behind those in material progress and was mixed up between them in social and political organisation.’

Statistics relating to general emigration from Bedford are not easily available, but the volume of work relating to those requiring confirmation of vaccination and other procedures before going abroad has certainly increased, and figures will be collected on this point in future.

Is the emigration of many trained persons who are adventurous enough to leave this country and face up to a more competitive and less protected life in Canada and Australia a symptom of social malaise? It would be hard to maintain the opposite. It is, I think, a symptom which requires a detailed investigation and should not be dismissed with easy optimism and a few figures showing what a small percentage is affected.



BOROUGH OF BEDFORD

REPORT

OF THE

Chief Public Health Inspector

For the Year 1956

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PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
TOWN HALL,
BEDFORD.

August, 1957.

To HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR,
ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS OF THE
BOROUGH OF BEDFORD.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting the Annual Report for the year 1956. I regret the necessity for me to perform this duty as your late Chief Public Health Inspector had expressed a special desire to submit his twenty-eighth report and his final one. This, unfortunately, has not been possible.

I am not in a position to comment widely on the contents of this report, but since taking up this appointment I have realised that the work of the Department is steadily increasing and the Public Health Inspectors are very fully employed. The existence of eight private slaughterhouses does complicate the work of the Public Health Inspectors, as the inspection of meat is of vital importance to the community, and it is essential that 100% inspection of all carcasses slaughtered must be maintained.

The presence of such large numbers of other nationals within the Borough also produces complex problems, but regular supervision of the houses let in lodgings occupied by the other nationals will, I feel sure, result in a raising of the standards of such premises.

New legislation, namely the Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955, and the Clean Air Act, 1956, is necessitating additional time being spent on these subjects, but will be tackled with zeal and determination by all concerned. The Rent Act, 1957, will of course present many problems and will necessitate a considerable amount of patience and tact in handling the subject.

Since taking up my appointment I have had exceptionally good co-operation from the Medical Officer of Health and all the Chief Officials, my deputy, the Public Health Inspectors, the clerical and manual staff. I also wish to record my sincere thanks to the members of the Council, particularly the members of the Public Health Committee, for their appreciation and co-operation in the work undertaken.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

E. AVISON,

Chief Public Health Inspector.

Annual Report of the Chief Public Health Inspector

I. SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

This report shows the nature of the duties carried out by the Public Health Inspectors during the year 1956, and includes particulars of sanitary inspections in the area; in conjunction with details referred to in the report of the Medical Officer of Health relating to Housing (Section V), and Inspection and Supervision of Food (Section VI).

1. Summary of General Inspections and Administrative Duties

Housing

Houses inspected under the Housing Act, 1936	...	...	119*
Houses requiring repairs	...	...	35
Houses totally unfit for human habitation	...	...	78
Houses repaired	...	...	27
Premises inspected under the Public Health Act, 1936	...	220	
Premises where nuisances discovered	...	...	201
Premises where nuisances abated	...	...	133
Revisits to houses under Housing and Public Health Acts			924

Overcrowding

Visits	...	...	5
Houses found to be overcrowded	...	...	3

Infectious Diseases

Investigations undertaken	190
---------------------------	-----	-----	-----

Verminous and other Conditions

Visits to verminous premises	14
------------------------------	-----	-----	----

Drainage

House drains tested on payment of fee	...	...	1
Drains tested or inspected on complaint	...	...	107
Revisits during repairs or reconstruction	...	...	260

* Includes 1 on which informal notice was served in previous year but which was re-inspected for purpose of the serving of statutory notice.

Visits to

Houses Let in Lodgings	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,265
Moveable Dwellings, Caravans, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	146
Public Houses	...	...	...	...	...	...	38
Hotels	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Restaurants	...	...	...	...	...	...	63
Fish Frying Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,061
Dairies and Milkshops	...	...	...	...	...	...	76
Other Shops and Premises where Food is prepared, stored or exposed for sale	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,711
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	43
Places of Entertainment	...	...	...	...	...	...	81
Factories with mechanical power	...	...	...	...	...	...	78
Factories without mechanical power	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Work places	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Outworkers' premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
Offices	...	...	...	...	...	...	49
Shops under Section 38, Shops Act, 1950	...	...	...	...	...	...	45
Premises where animals are kept	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Offensive trades premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Manufacturers and Stores—Rag Flock and other filling materials	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
Sundry nuisances	...	...	...	...	...	...	148
Miscellaneous visits	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,037
Borough Mortuary	...	...	...	...	...	...	55
Baths and Treatment Centre	...	...	...	...	...	...	3

Food and Drugs

Samples submitted to Public Analyst:—

Milk	...	...	...	...	...	...	60
Ice Cream	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Other foods and drugs	...	...	...	...	...	...	36

Samples examined by the Public Health Laboratory Service:—

Milk	...	...	...	...	...	...	142
Ice Cream	...	...	...	...	...	...	34

Samples examined at the Public Health Department:—

Milk	3
------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	---

Total number of samples obtained for examination	277
--	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Rats and Mice Destruction

Inspection of premises by Public Health Inspectors	...	...	...	...	...	85
Inspection of premises by Rodent Operators	...	...	...	...	...	938
Visits for treatment, including revisits	...	...	...	...	...	1,311

Rent Restriction Acts

Investigations and interviews	179
-------------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Smoke Abatement

Observations made	...	...	...	...	...	132
Interviews with managers, stokers, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	34
Inspection of boiler plant	...	...	...	...	...	27

Merchandise Marks Act

Visits to traders' premises, stalls and vehicles	963
--	-----	-----	-----

General and Office Routine

Visits for interviews with owners, agents, builders, tenants, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	1,298
Interviews at office with owners, agents, builders, tenants, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	2,112

General Administration

	Informal	Formal
Notices served:—		
Housing Act	35	4
Housing Repairs and Rents Act	44	6
Public Health Act	139	76
Shops Act	1	—
Factories Act	2	—
Food and Drugs Act	52	—
Total number of notices served	273	86

2. Detailed Nature of Work carried out as a Result of Inspections

(A) DWELLING HOUSES

General Improvements

Defective roofs repaired or renewed	...	...	...	44
Eaves gutters and downspouts repaired or renewed	...	...	...	29
Damp walls remedied	...	...	...	20
Defective walls, brickwork and pointing made sound	...	...	...	29
Rooms cleansed and redecorated	...	...	...	35
Defective floors repaired or renewed	...	...	...	10
Defective windows repaired or renewed	...	...	...	35
Defective doors repaired or renewed	...	...	...	10
Defective firegrates repaired or renewed	...	...	...	17
Defective stair treads repaired or renewed	...	...	...	2
Handrails provided to stairs	...	...	...	1
Defective coppers repaired or renewed	...	...	...	2
Glazed sinks provided in lieu of defective sinks	...	...	...	6
Sinks and waste pipes repaired or renewed	...	...	...	7
Chimney heads or pots repaired or renewed	...	...	...	6

Water Closets

Structural works undertaken	...	...	...	...	...	6
New compartments built	...	...	...	...	...	—
Separated from barns	...	...	...	...	...	—
Pedestal pans provided in lieu of defective pans	...	...	...	...	...	30
Fittings repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	...	25

Outhouses

Outhouses repaired	...	...	...	...	...	1
Outhouses demolished	...	...	...	...	...	—

Yards

Houses at which paving was repaired or renewed	...	...	...	...	9
Nuisances arising from keeping of animals	...	...	...	...	—
Sanitary dustbins provided	...	...	...	...	36

Infectious and other Diseases

Rooms and contents disinfected	15
--------------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

Disinfestation

Rooms and contents disinfested	50
--------------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

(B) OTHER HOUSING ACCOMMODATION

Houses let in Lodgings

Additional sinks provided	...	...	...	...	27
Additional cooking stoves provided	...	...	...	...	31
W.C. compartments repaired	...	...	...	...	1
Additional W.C. compartments provided	...	...	...	...	3

(C) FOOD PREMISES

Public Houses and Hotels

W.Cs. provided	...	...	...	...	...	3
Urinals provided	...	...	...	...	...	2
Washbasins provided	...	...	...	...	...	2
Rooms cleansed and redecorated	...	...	...	...	...	8
Other improvements	...	...	...	...	...	2

Food Preparing Rooms

General cleansing and redecoration	...	...	...	...	6
Washbasins provided	...	...	...	...	4
W.C. compartments cleansed	...	...	...	...	4
Sanitary dustbins provided	...	...	...	...	2
Hot water supply provided	...	...	...	...	2

Dairies

Dairies at which improvements made	—
Dairies where limewashing and general cleansing undertaken	—

Slaughterhouses

Regular periodic limewashing and general cleansing	8
---	---

(D) OTHER PREMISES

Factories

Sanitary accommodation requirements complied with:—

(a) Provided	—
(b) Repaired	3
Regular periodic limewashing and general cleansing ...	2
Other defects remedied	7

Shops

W.Cs. repaired, etc.	2
-----------------------------	---

Drainage (all premises)

Drains repaired	134
Drains wholly relaid	1
Blocked drains cleared	250

II. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. Housing

(A) HOUSING ACT, 1936, AND HOUSING REPAIRS AND RENTS ACT, 1954

(i) House Repairs

Detailed inspections have been made at 41 houses, of which 6 were found to be in order. Works of repair were required to be undertaken at the remaining 35 houses and informal notices were served upon the owners. 27 notices have been complied with during the year, including some outstanding from 1955, and at the end of the year 37 notices had not been complied with, though in most cases work was in progress or instructions had been given to a builder to proceed with the repairs.

In 4 instances it was necessary for statutory notices to be served under Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1936. One statutory notice was complied with, and works of repair were commenced early in 1957 at the 3 remaining houses. It was not necessary for the Local Authority to carry out works of repair in default of the owner.

(ii) Demolition of Unfit Houses

The following table gives details of houses represented as unfit during the year and also shows the number of houses demolished.

Situation	No. of Houses	Date of Representation	Date Demolished	Remarks
1-20 Beauchamp Row (includes 7a)	21	1/3/56	—	} Remaining Houses should be demolished during 1957
22-24 Cricket Lane	2	1/3/56	Aug., 1956	
42-48 Mile Road	4	1/3/56	19/12/1956	
50-52 Mile Road	2	1/3/56	—	
31a-41a Harewood Road	6	1/3/56	Sept., 1956	
23-25 Lancaster Avenue	2	1/3/56	—	
24-30 Allhallows Lane	4	28/11/56	—	
22-30 Greenhill Street	5	28/11/56	—	
30-46 Priory Street	9	28/11/56	—	
70-76 Mile Road	4	28/11/56	—	
42-44 Harewood Road	2	28/11/56	—	
10-12 Kent Avenue	2	28/11/56	—	
79 Pilcroft Street	1	28/11/56	—	
2, 4, 7-23 St. John's Place	11	28/11/56	—	
12, 14, 16 Barker's Lane	3	10/7/56	—	

With the exception of the 3 cottages in Barkers Lane, all of these houses belong to the Bedford Corporation.

In addition the following houses represented as unfit during 1955 were demolished or closed.

1 Brace Street —Undertaking accepted that house would not be used for human habitation.—10.1.1956.

33 Alexandra Road
(Basement Rooms)—Part of house closed.—13.1.1956.

Putnoe Lodge,
Putnoe Street —Demolished.—23.5.1956.

(iii) Certificates of Disrepair

One application for a Certificate of Disrepair was made and after consideration by a sub-committee of the Public Health Committee a Certificate was issued.

During the year two applications were made for revocation of Certificates of Disrepair, and these were granted.

Since the Housing Repairs and Rents Act of 1954 came into force only 6 applications for Certificates of Disrepair have been made, all of which were granted; 3 of these Certificates have since been revoked.

(iv) House Let in Lodgings

At the end of the year 341 premises occupied as Houses Let in Lodgings were known to the Public Health Department, mainly in the occupation of foreign nationals. The majority of these premises are situated in the residential areas of the Borough.

The following schedule gives details relating to various nationalities known to be occupying houses let in lodgings, together with the number of rooms and occupants.

Nationality	Number of Rooms	Families				Single men	
		Number	Adults	Ch.	Rooms	Number	Rooms
Albanian ...	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
American... ..	11	4	8	3	8	3	3
British	245	64	138	30	159	99	86
Brit. W. Indian ...	110	33	66	8	35	133	75
Czech	4	1	2	—	1	2	3
Dutch	3	1	2	1	2	1	1
Estonian	2	—	—	—	—	2	2
German	9	—	—	—	—	11	9
Greek	4	2	4	2	3	2	1
Hungarian	3	1	2	—	1	2	2
Indian	14	1	2	—	1	22	13
Irish	61	16	32	17	26	64	35
Italian	1,200	635	1,303	510	821	592	379
Latvian	61	7	15	7	12	55	49
Lithuanian	2	—	—	—	—	3	2
Polish	208	52	111	54	120	100	88
Roumanian	3	2	4	1	2	1	1
Ukranian... ..	33	8	17	3	14	24	19
Yugoslav... ..	80	28	63	24	48	30	32
Totals	2,054	855	1,769	660	1,253	1,147	801

Number of rooms occupied	...	...	...	...	...	2,054
Number of rooms used as Common Rooms	...	...	...	...	...	269
Number of empty rooms	...	...	...	...	...	128
						<hr/>
Total rooms	...	...	...	...	...	2,451
						<hr/>
Number of sinks	...	...	...	...	...	551
Number of cookers	...	...	...	...	...	637
Number of W.C.s	...	...	...	...	...	565
Total number of houses occupied as Houses let in Lodgings						341
Total number of persons accommodated	...	...	...	...	...	3,576

On inspection of the premises it was found necessary to serve 30 informal notices requiring the provision of additional amenities, and 24 informal notices in respect of overcrowding. Subsequently, statutory notices were served in 4 cases relating to the provision of amenities and 3 in respect of overcrowding. At some houses the number of occupants was reduced and it was therefore not necessary to provide the additional amenities, whilst in most other cases the works were completed or were in progress at the end of the year.

Certificates—Availability of Accommodation

Before Italian families are permitted to enter the country and proceed to Bedford, the premises they propose to occupy are inspected and, if considered suitable, a certificate of availability of accommodation is issued. During the year 270 applications for certificates were received and dealt with as follows:

Approved	...	...	...	191
Refused	...	...	...	77
Withdrawn	...	...	...	2

A few cases occurred where a family arrived without a Certificate of Accommodation, or where the family were proceeding to a different address to that stated on the Certificate. These cases were referred to the Aliens Department of the local Police Headquarters who reported the facts to the Home Office. Italian families entering this country and proceeding to towns other than Bedford do not appear to require a similar certificate but occasionally these families subsequently move into Bedford.

Furnished Accommodation—Rents

Investigations were made at 22 houses let in lodgings regarding the rents being charged for furnished accommodation. The Public Health Committee considered the reports made as a result of these investigations and subsequently 12 cases were submitted to the Rent Tribunal for their consideration.

Decisions of the Rent Tribunal were as follows. This table includes one case submitted in 1955 but not dealt with until 1956.

Address		Gross Rent at time of Investigation per week	Rent Tribunal's Decision (Gross Rent) per week
8 Alexandra Place	...	18 14 0	12 5 0
79 Ashburnham Road	...	13 2 6	10 4 0
53 Chaucer Road	...	10 0 0	Deferred—House subsequently vaca- ted having been taken over by Building Society
64 Chaucer Road	...	11 12 0	9 10 0
74 Chaucer Road	...	16 5 0	11 3 0
69 Ford End Road	...	3 5 0	2 0 0
71 Ford End Road	...	7 10 0	4 0 0
37 Grafton Road	...	13 5 0	5 15 0
18 Lansdowne Road	...	14 10 0	14 10 0
36 Lansdowne Road	...	11 5 0	11 5 0
54 Warwick Avenue	...	12 5 0	6 9 0
58 Warwick Avenue		16 0 0	7 10 0

In addition, at 3 houses which the Committee decided to make reference to the Rent Tribunal the owner changed the tenancy conditions so as to include meals. This made reference to the Tribunal impossible.

Rent Books

The Bedford Corporation Act 1956, came into force during 1956. This Act provides that the owner of a house let in lodgings shall provide each person who occupies part of a house and who is an alien, with a Rent Book or other similar document, and specifies the information that the rent book shall contain.

In August, letters explaining the Act were sent to owners of 257 houses where aliens were known to reside and since that date when new houses let in lodgings are discovered a similar letter has been forwarded. It has been found that most owners have made a genuine attempt to provide rent books containing the correct information. Some cases were reported or discovered where rent books were not provided and it was usually found that the owner had not understood exactly what was required.

General

During the year 8a Tavistock Place was purchased by the Corporation and converted into 6 units of accommodation, for occupation by foreign national families living in overcrowded circumstances. Tenancies commenced in October, 1956.

Considerable assistance has been received from Mr. L. Conte, Italian Consular Agent and his staff during the year, which has been greatly appreciated by the Public Health Department, especially in view of language difficulties.

(iv) Overcrowding

The following table shows the position with regard to overcrowding as at 31st December, 1956.

Overcrowding cases outstanding at December, 1955	...	...	—
New cases discovered during 1956	...	...	3
			—
Total	...	...	3
			—
Number of cases abated during 1956	...	...	2
Number of cases outstanding at 31st December, 1956	...	...	1

Overcrowding discovered in 1956 was caused as follows:—

By the tenant and family exceeding the permitted number of persons allowed to occupy the house	3
--	-----	-----	---

In addition to the above, 24 cases of overcrowding were discovered in rooms in houses let in lodgings, most of which were abated by the end of the year.

(v) Purchase of Property

The policy of the purchase of houses of low standard has been continued, such houses being mainly situated in the central re-development area. 31 houses were purchased by this Department of which 1 was unfit, 14 of low standard, and 16 others. In addition a Mission Hall, a factory and two pieces of land were purchased. Negotiations are still being conducted for the purchase for the Corporation of more properties in such areas. During the past few years some 470 houses have been bought by this Department for the Council.

The purchase of property by occupiers is still taking place on a fairly large scale with the result that house ownership has enabled them to carry out improvements and to maintain the houses on a higher standard. A large number of searches are made at this Department under the Land Registry Act, from which it may be assumed that property changes hands at a high rate.

(vi) Houses without Secondary Means of Access

It is estimated that there are 105 older type houses in which access from the yard or garden to the street can only be made by the front door, thus fuel and household refuse has to be carried through the house. A large number of these houses are situated in re-development areas and should eventually be demolished.

(B) HOUSING ACT, 1949

Improvement Grants

Under the Act it is possible to obtain financial assistance in order to effect improvements to private houses, such as provision of baths with hot water supply, washbasins with additional lavatory accommodation, or reasonable extensions to provide additional housing accommodation. The Borough Engineer and Surveyor is responsible for the administration of this scheme, but during the course of house inspection advice has been given by the Public Health Inspectors on the possibilities of obtaining grants for such purposes. 76 grants were made.

Most applications for improvement grants were made by owner-occupiers of houses, but landlords, with a few exceptions, do not appear to desire to take advantage of the scheme in view of restrictive rents.

(C) PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936

220 houses were inspected under the Act for minor defects or nuisances, and as a result 139 informal notices and 76 statutory notices were served. All complaints received were investigated and necessary action taken to abate nuisances discovered.

(D) HOUSING AMENITIES

(i) Baths

Plans for provision of bathrooms at 87 houses were submitted and approved. 70 of these were installed in houses occupied by owners, and for which an Improvement Grant was received under the Housing Act, 1949.

It is now estimated that there are some 4,275 houses in the Borough without fixed baths. Many of these houses are situated in proposed re-development areas, or are either unfit or of low standard, and therefore the provision of baths is not reasonable.

(ii) Water Supply

The following table shows houses without internal water supply.

HOUSES WITHOUT INTERNAL WATER SUPPLY OR SINKS

Situation	Without internal water supply	Without sinks	Means of water supply
*St. John's Place (Almshouses) ...	4	4	4 taps in yard connected to public main
*St. Loyes Street (Almshouses) ...	8	8	3 taps in yard connected to public main
†Brickhill Farm Cottage	1	—	Well in garden
Biddenham, Ford End	6	5	Well in garden, stand-pipe from Town main to be provided during 1957
Totals	19	17	

* Scheduled for demolition.

† In remote situation.

(iii) Closet Accommodation

Apart from the exceptions quoted in the following table every house in the Borough is provided with a separate closet.

Situation	No. of houses	No. of water closets
*42-56 St. Loyes Street (Almshouses)	8	4
*7, 9, 17, 19 St. John's Place (Almshouses) ...	4	2
*494, 496 Goldington Road	2	1
Total	14	7

* Scheduled for demolition

It is estimated that 440 houses, including 45 almshouses, have W.Cs. situated at the bottom of the garden or yard. W.Cs. in this situation are not ideal, especially at houses where aged people reside.

All water closets have flushing cisterns.

2. Drainage and Sewerage

(A) DRAINAGE

The drains at one private house were tested on payment of a fee of 15s., and following the discovery of minor defects these were duly remedied.

At 58 houses works of repair or reconstruction to the public sewers were carried out by the local authority and the cost of so doing was charged to the various owners.

At 37 premises work of repair or reconstruction to drains was carried out under the supervision of this Department.

At 39 houses drains were tested on complaint or on account of rat infestation, and defects were remedied. 250 public sewers or drains were found to be blocked and these have been cleared.

(B) HOUSES AND FACTORIES NOT CONNECTED TO THE PUBLIC SEWERS

There are now 30 houses and 8 factories with no drainage to sewers. During 1956 two houses in Putnoe Street (formerly with pail closets) were connected to the sewer, and three other houses with pail closets were demolished.

3. Household Refuse

(A) PROVISION OF SANITARY DUSTBINS

On inspection it was found that at 32 houses there was no satisfactory bin for storage of household refuse and it was necessary to serve informal notices.

As owners failed in 8 instances to supply the bin a report was submitted to the Public Health Committee who authorised the service of formal notices. Of these 7 were supplied by the owners, but in the case of the remaining 1, on account of the failure of the owner to do so, a bin was supplied by the local authority, the cost being recoverable.

(B) REFUSE COLLECTION

The collection of refuse is under the control of the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, and modern type vehicles are used. The disposal of refuse is by tipping at disused gravel pits adjoining the old smallpox hospital.

4. Inspection of Premises (Other than Houses)

Public Health Act, 1936

(A) OFFICES

There are at least 300 office blocks in the Borough, and from observation made during inspections it can generally be stated that the premises are being maintained in a satisfactory condition. As far as is known there are none situated in basements.

(B) PUBLIC HOUSES

Structural alterations were made at one public house in order to improve the sanitary conveniences. It is understood that plans are being prepared in respect of other public houses in the town for improvement to the sanitary accommodation.

(C) HOTELS AND BOARDING HOUSES

In the Borough there are 8 Licensed Hotels and 4 Unlicensed premises, together with a small number of privately owned boarding houses.

It may be stated that generally the hotels are maintained in a satisfactory state, although it would appear that at times there is a shortage of accommodation, there being only approximately 320 beds available.

(D) CINEMAS, THEATRES AND DANCE HALLS

There is one Theatre in the Borough licensed by the Town Council, and four Cinemas licensed by the Bedfordshire County Council. In addition there is a Civic Theatre in the Town Hall.

The structural alterations to the Theatre continued during the year and are still in progress. These works included alterations to the Dance Hall adjoining the Theatre and this Hall has now been re-opened.

Additional sanitary accommodation for both sexes was provided at the Plaza Cinema, and in general all cinemas have been maintained in a satisfactory condition.

(E) PLACES OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT

A new sanitary block providing accommodation for both sexes was provided on the west side of the ground of the Bedford Town Association Football Club.

(F) RIVER, STREAMS AND PONDS

Complaints continued to be received regarding the pollution of the stream from Elstow Road to Cardington Road. These were referred to the Borough Engineer's Department, and upon completion of drainage works in the Elstow Road area it is hoped that the stream will be free from pollution.

Complaints of dumping of a minor nature have been made in respect of some other small streams in the town and these have been cleaned out from time to time.

(G) PLACES WHERE ANIMALS ARE KEPT

On the outskirts of the town, mainly on allotments, there are several piggeries and these have been maintained in a fairly satisfactory condition. Occasional complaints are received regarding the keeping of poultry in back gardens and action is taken if it is considered that the poultry are being kept in such a manner as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance.

(H) SMOKE ABATEMENT

Observations have been maintained on the chimneys within the Borough and in 8 instances excessive emission of black smoke was noted. The managements were notified and investigations made in order to prevent the recurrence of smoke nuisance.

5. Food and Drugs Act, 1955

This Act came into operation on the 1st January, 1956, together with the Food Hygiene Regulations which operated in part from the 1st January and as a whole from the 1st July, 1956.

(A) FOOD PREMISES

The following schedule shows the number of food premises in Bedford together with their classification by type of business.

Trade	Number in Main Trades
Bakehouses	27
Banana Merchants	1
Biscuit Depots	1
Brewery and Soft Drink Manufacturers ...	3
Butchers	51
Cafes and Restaurants	39
Canteens	46
Chemists	22
Confectioners (Flour)	33
Confectioners (Sugar)	53
Continental Food Stores	8
Corndealeters and Flour	5
Clubs	15
Dairies	14
Fish Fryers	17
Fishmongers—Retail	5
—Wholesale	2
Flour Mills	1
Food Storage Depots	3
Fruiterers and Greengrocers	56
Grain Silo	1
Grocery and Provisions	158
Hotels (Licensed)	8
Public Houses	96
Slaughterhouses	8
Sweet and Chocolate Manufacturers ...	2
Off Licences—Alcoholic	18
Total	<hr/> 693 <hr/>

In addition there are 40 food stalls on the market square, as under:—

Confectionery	3
Fish	4
Snack Bars	2
Fruit and Vegetables	30
Ice Cream	1

The following table shows the number of premises registered under Section 16 of the Act for the following trades:—

Manufacture of Ice Cream	...	...	3
Storage and/or Sale of Ice Cream	...	...	169
*Preparation or manufacture of sausage, or potted, pressed, pickled or preserved food			52

** Includes 17 fish frying premises*

Early in 1956 all food traders in the Borough were circularised regarding the provisions of the Food Hygiene Regulations 1955, which make provisions for the hygienic handling of food; for additional facilities for personnel engaged in the handling of food and for the cleansing of utensils and equipment used in food trades.

A total of 1,950 visits was made to food premises (excluding slaughterhouses) which on the whole were maintained in a satisfactory condition.

Contraventions were discovered at 50 premises and the occupiers were requested to comply with the Regulations.

(B) WORKS AND SCHOOL CANTEENS

All these canteens have been visited during the year, and were found to be well maintained. Improvements were carried out at several of the canteens.

(C) SLAUGHTERHOUSES

The eight private slaughterhouses in the Town have been well maintained. The owner of one slaughterhouse did not apply for renewal of licence at the end of the year and the premises ceased to be licensed at the end of the year.

(D) MARKET

Constant attention is given to the matter of risk of contamination of food on the open air market stalls and all reasonable steps are taken by the stall holders to prevent this. The provision of a covered-in market would, no doubt, considerably help to reduce contamination, particularly by dust, etc.

III. SHOPS ACT, 1950—SECTION 38

This Department administers the above named Section of the Shops Act to ensure that the provisions relating to the health and comfort of shop workers are adhered to, and for this purpose 45 visits were made. Minor defects only were discovered.

Plans for all new shops are examined by this Department to ensure that they comply with all necessary requirements.

IV. PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS WHICH CAN BE CONTROLLED BY BYELAWS AND REGULATIONS

1. Moveable Dwellings

(A) AT FAIR AND CIRCUS GROUNDS

Caravans used by the showmen attending the Statute Fairs in Commercial Road and Goldington Green, and fair and circus grounds in Cardington Road were inspected and found to be maintained in a very cleanly condition.

(B) PRIVATE SITES

Licenses were granted to occupiers of caravans on the following sites:—

Site	No. of caravans
Paddock, 1 Goldington Green	4
The Swan, Goldington Road	3
The Crown Public House, Goldington Road ...	1
Farm, Bury Walk	1
r/o Lido Garage, Honey Hill Road	1
Total	10

(C) CHALETS

Visits were also made during the year to riverside chalets off Cardington Road, which are occupied during the summer months, and these were found to be satisfactory.

(D) INDUSTRIAL SITES

Inspections have been made of the temporary huts and caravans on the sites of the new Power Station, Barker's Lane, and the new Water Works in Clapham Road. These are occupied by workmen only and are kept in a satisfactory condition. There is ample sanitary accommodation and water supply.

The occupants obtain their meals at the works canteens nearby.

V. PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

1. Premises Inspected and Treated

The following table shows the number and type of premises inspected and treated.

	Type of property				
	Local authority	Dwelling houses	Agricultural	Business	Total
Number of properties inspected—					
(a) on complaint	10	279	—	68	357
(b) on survey	19	345	6	211	581
Number of properties found to be infested with rats—					
(a) major	—	1	—	—	1
(b) minor	20	178	2	31	231
Number of properties found to be infested with mice	2	135	2	39	178
Number of infested properties treated by Local Authority ...	22	312	4	66	404
Number of re-visits to infested premises	55	769	12	121	957
Number of notices served—					
(i) treatment	—	—	—	7	7
(ii) structural works	—	—	—	7	7
Number of block control schemes carried out	ONE				

At one premises major infestation of rats was discovered and subsequent treatment proved effective.

In one case of infestation it was necessary to undertake treatment at a block of properties with satisfactory results.

54 contracts were entered into during the year and the sum of £65 13s. 0d. was received by the Borough Treasurer for such work.

2. Sewers

The policy of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries is for half-yearly treatment to be undertaken, but in order to determine where treatment is required at the beginning of the year test baits are laid in a number of the sewer manholes. The sewers which were most infested were chiefly those situated in the older parts of the Borough.

The following table shows the number of manholes baited during the year and the results of such treatment.

Number of test baits laid 111

Area No.	No. of manholes	No. of manholes baited	No. of manholes showing pre-bait take	No. of manholes showing complete take	No. of manholes showing no take
1 West of High Street and North of river	482	463	275	248	173
2 East of High Street and North of river	350	218	41	36	177
3 South of the river ...	450	213	54	48	159
Totals	*1,282	894	370	332	509

* Includes 138 lampholes

In accordance with the instructions of the Ministry concerned, after poison baits are laid no further inspection is undertaken until the next half-yearly treatment is commenced, so it is not possible to give any estimate of the number of rats destroyed immediately after treatment.

3. General

As pointed out in previous reports the work of eradication of rats and mice, although not a profit making service, is regarded as an important one as much damage to property and food-stuffs is prevented and the possible risk of epidemic disease is checked. The only charge made for rodent control treatment is 7s. per hour per man to business premises, a formal contract being entered into. No charge is made in respect of dwelling houses.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries organised for the workable area Refresher Courses for rodent operators in October and for Public Health Inspectors in November. These were arranged by and held at the Public Health Department.

VI. NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948

Section 50—Burial or Cremation of the Dead

As no arrangements for burial had been made by relatives or friends it was necessary for the Department to arrange for the burial of the bodies of four persons. Details are as follows:—

No.	Age	Sex	Cost of funeral	Recovery of expense
1	81	M	£ s. d. 11 17 6	Full cost recovered
2	49	F	15 13 6	No assets. Death grant only recovered
3	9 hrs.	M	2 7 6	Died in hospital—mother discharged and subsequently could not be traced
4	68	M	13 0 0	Full cost recovered

VII. RENT RESTRICTION ACTS, 1920-1946

1. Unfurnished and Furnished Accommodation

Notification was received from the Local Rent Tribunal that 17 Borough cases relating to furnished accommodation were considered and that in two instances the rent was approved and in 15 reductions were made. These figures include the cases referred to on pages 55 and 56.

2. General

With regard to the provisions of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, this has been reported upon on page 53.

Owners, tenants, sub-tenants and lodgers have visited the office on many occasions seeking information concerning eviction and rent charges. In some cases tenants of furnished accommodation have been evicted on High Court Writs which have made some extra demand on the Borough's housing accommodation.

On inspection of houses and flats it has been found that quite frequently the legal requirements are not entered in the rent book, and attention of the owners has been directed to such omissions.

VIII. FACTORIES ACT, 1937

1. Inspections

The following tables show the number of factories on the register, the number of inspections made and the number of defects discovered and the results of action taken.

INSPECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISIONS AS TO HEALTH

Premises	No. on Register	No. of inspections	No. of written notices	No. of occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	47	6	—	—
* (ii) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	304	78	2	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises) ...	39	3	—	—
Total	390	87	2	—

* Many of these are small factories where only a few persons are employed.

CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which proceedings were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	Referred by H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	—	2 (2)	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature ...	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation ...	1	3 (2)	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors...	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences—					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	3 (3)	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	1	1	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	1	3 (2)	—	1	—
Total	3	12 (9)	—	1	—

Note.—Figures in brackets denote work outstanding from previous years; these are included in unbracketed figures.

2. Outwork

The following shows the number of outworkers on the register:—

Nature of Work	No. of Persons
Wearing apparel (making, etc.)	53
Household linen	3
Curtains and furniture hangings	3
Furniture and upholstery	2
	—
Total	61
	—

IX. DISINFECTION AND DISINFESTATION

1. Disinfection

Steam disinfection of quantities of bedding, clothing, etc., was undertaken for bedding firms and national and local authorities and undertakings, for which charges were made to cover expenses. A sum of £4 11s. 0d. was received in this connection plus 10/- for collection and delivery. Disinfection is also undertaken, free of charge, for householders in cases of notifiable and other diseases.

2. Disinfestation

The work of destroying insect pests of all types is carried out by this Department, and no charge is made for this service. The general method is by the spraying of liquid insecticides, or powder, containing D.D.T. and other chemicals. The results of treatment were satisfactory in all cases. There were no serious infestations.

The following table shows the number of infested premises treated, together with the types of infestation.

Premises	Nature of Vermin	Number of Premises
Houses—Council	Bugs	22
	Ants	10
	Wasps	—
	Beetles, etc.	28
Houses—privately owned ...	Bugs	6
	Ants	13
	Wasps	13
	Beetles, etc.	12
Business premises	Bugs	—
	Ants	4
	Wasps	1
	Beetles, etc.	—
Total		109

At 6 houses, in addition to the above, it was found necessary to remove and destroy filthy bedding and clothing, and at some the bedding was removed for steam disinfestation.

X. OTHER ACTS AND ORDERS

1. Merchandise Marks Act, 1926

Constant observations were made on shops, stalls and vehicles to ensure that the requirements of the above named Act, and Orders made thereunder, with regard to labelling of certain imported foodstuffs were being complied with. There were several instances when certain fruits exposed for sale (generally on the Market Square) were not properly labelled and on attention of the vendors being called to this immediate action was taken to label the commodities.

Details of the Orders made under the Act are available in leaflet form and may be obtained from this Department by traders and others on request. From time to time, however, copies of these leaflets are distributed to the wholesale and retail trades concerned.

2. Rag Flock and Other Filling Materials Act, 1951

There are only five premises at which rag flock is used by the furnishing trade, and as this material was supplied with guarantees of cleanliness it was not considered necessary to take samples.

3. Pet Animals Act, 1951

This Act governs the licensing and the conditions under which pet animals are kept for sale; there are four premises and one market stall registered. From a hygienic point of view the premises are being maintained in a satisfactory condition.

4. Offensive Trades

Old Metal and Marine Stores

There are three traders who deal in rags and bones (an offensive trade) as well as scrap metal and salvageable items. Also there are four other traders who deal in old metal and marine stores only. On visiting, the premises were found to be satisfactorily maintained.

In addition, the local authority maintains a salvage depot at Newnham, under the supervision of the Borough Engineer.

5. AGRICULTURE ACT 1956

Agriculture (Safety, Health and Welfare Provisions) Act, 1956

Section 3 of this Act is enforceable by Local Authorities and relates to sanitary accommodation. Six farms were inspected, 4 of which were found to be satisfactory, while contraventions existed at the 2 remaining farms. Suitable sanitary accommodation should be available at these 2 farms during 1957.

XI. MISCELLANEOUS

1. Building Plans

In conjunction with the Borough Engineer and Surveyor's Department all plans for new buildings or alterations to existing premises deposited for approval by the Town Planning Committee are examined to ensure that they comply with the Acts and Byelaws concerned, and if any adjustments are required these are undertaken before submission to the Committee.

2. Town Planning and Re-development Schemes

Some time was spent in work involved in the acquisition of property situated in the central re-development area and also properties on the line of the proposed new road from Willmer's Corner to Cauldwell Street, in order to assist with the scheme.

3. Hairdressers

There are the following hairdressing establishments in the town:—

For both sexes	...	...	...	...	10
For males only	...	...	...	...	29
For females only	...	...	...	...	29*
					—
Total	...	...	...	...	68
					—

* Seven of these are situated in private houses.

In order to ensure a reasonable standard of hygiene in this type of business visits are made from time to time, and generally conditions have been satisfactory.

4. Public Conveniences

The public conveniences in the town centre are controlled by the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, while those situated in the Parks and Recreation Grounds are under the supervision of the Parks Superintendent. Additional sanitary accommodation for both sexes was opened at Longholme, near the Boathouse. By the end of the year the alterations to the St. Paul's Square conveniences were practically completed.

5. Harpur Trust Almshouses

In order to assist the appropriate Committee in filling vacancies at these almshouses the Housing Manager and myself continued the policy of selecting from the applicants suitable persons for the above named houses, and visiting where found necessary before making recommendations.

6. Public Health Education

Talks have been given to various organisations and to students from local training colleges regarding Public Health Inspectors' duties and food hygiene.

